



University of Leicester

Archaeological Services

An Archaeological Strip,
Map and Sample Excavation
at Newhouse Grange,
Orton Lane, Sheepy Magna,
Leicestershire
(SK 317 024)




Roger Kipling

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Map and Sample Excavation
at Newhouse Grange,
Orton Lane,
Sheepy Magna, Leicestershire
(SK 317 024)**

Roger Kipling

For: Mr. & Mrs. R. Poulson

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An Archaeological Strip, Map and Sample Excavation at Newhouse Grange, Orton Lane, Sheepy Magna, Leicestershire

[NGR: SK 317 024]

Roger Kipling

Summary

An archaeological strip, map and sample excavation was undertaken in July 2013 by University of Leicester Archaeological Services on behalf of Mr. & Mrs. R. Poulson. The fieldwork was undertaken in response to a planning application for the construction of a new barn at Newhouse Grange, Orton Lane, Sheepy Magna, Leicestershire, in order to assess the potential impact of the development on any archaeological remains as may have been present.

The archaeological work at Newhouse Grange, Orton Lane, Sheepy Magna, produced no evidence of archaeological activity, either in artefactual or structural terms, reflecting the location of the site beyond the probable limits of the medieval monastic grange.

The site archive will be deposited with the Leicestershire County Council under the accession number X.A85. 2013.

Introduction

An archaeological strip, map and sample excavation was undertaken at Newhouse Grange, Orton Lane, Sheepy Magna, Leicestershire. The extension to the proposed new barn is known to lie within an area associated with the medieval grange at Newhouse, said to be linked to Merevale Abbey and of which, the tithe barn survives. The Great Barn at Newhouse Grange is a large medieval aisled barn, Grade II* Listed, of 14th-15th century date. It was therefore deemed possible that remains of other buildings associated with the complex might survive as buried remains. In addition to the potential for medieval archaeological remains to be present, finds recovered during fieldwalking also suggest earlier settlement in the vicinity (ELE 4383).

In consequence, Leicestershire County Council, Historic and Natural Environment Team (LCCHNET), acting as archaeological advisors to the planning authority, requested that a strip map and sample excavation of the area of proposed groundworks be undertaken in order to identify and locate any archaeological remains of significance and propose suitable treatment to avoid or minimise damage by the

development. The agreed scheme was set out in a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI; ULAS 2013).

The archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Section 12 Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment, Policy (DCLG 2012). It has been produced in response to a planning condition from Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council following advice from the Historic and Natural Environment Team, Environment and Heritage Services Department, Leicestershire County Council. The archaeological work follows a written scheme of investigation (WSI) for a phase of archaeological strip, plan and sample excavation of the area of the proposed extension. The fieldwork specified below is intended to investigate and record any buried archaeological remains which may exist on the site that are affected by the proposed groundworks.

The definition of archaeological excavation, taken from the Institute for Archaeologists *Standards and Guidance: for Archaeological excavations* (IfA 2010) is a controlled programme of intrusive fieldwork with defined research objectives which examines, records and interprets archaeological deposits, features, structures, and as appropriate, retrieves artefacts or ecofacts within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater. The records made and objects gathered during fieldwork are studied and the results of that study published in detail appropriate to the project design.

Site Description, Topography and Geology

Newhouse Grange (SK 317 024) is located to the north-west of Sheepy Magna, between the village and Orton on the Hill, south of Orton Lane (Fig. 1). The proposed development site lies on the northern edge of the farmyard adjacent to a modern barn and fronting onto cultivated arable land.

The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain Sheet 169 indicates that the underlying geology of the site is likely to consist of Bosworth Clay Member (BOSW) overlying Gunthorpe Member (GUN). The site is effectively flat, lies at a height of c.87m O.D. and appears to be the original topography.

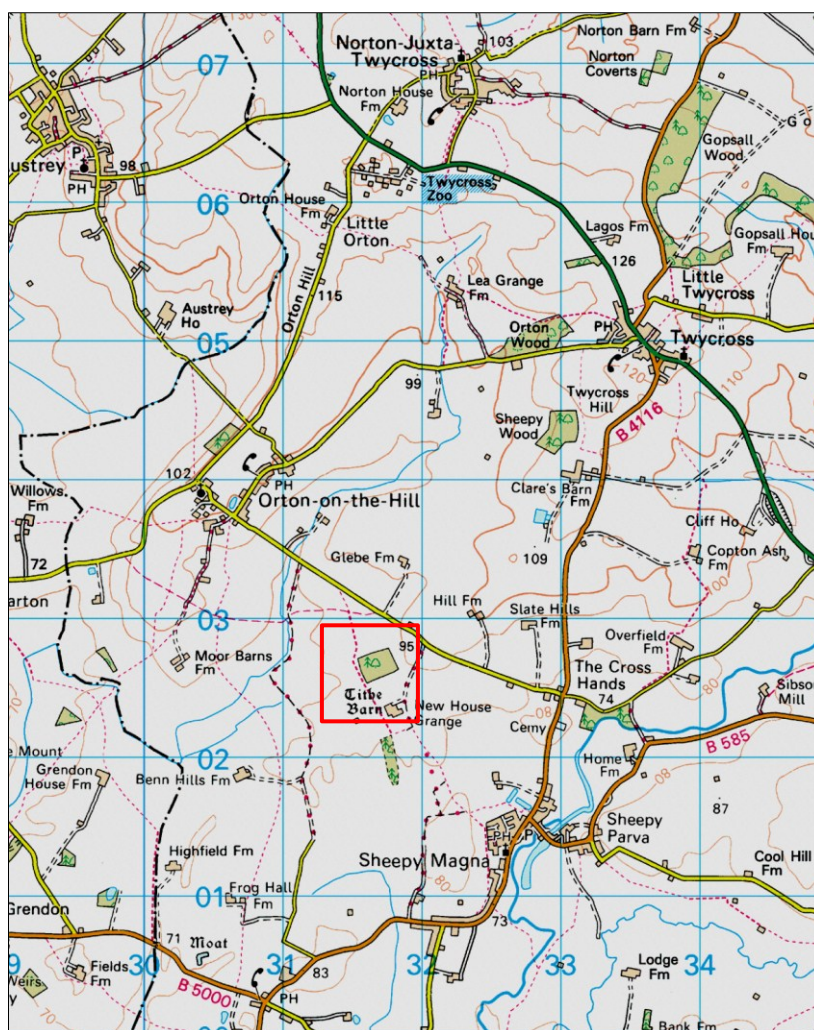


Figure 1: Site Location (Scale 1:50 000)

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Archaeological and Historical Background

The proposed barn extension was believed to lie within an area associated with the medieval grange at Newhouse, said to be linked to Merevale Abbey and of which the tithe barn survives. The Great Barn at Newhouse Grange is a large medieval aisled barn, Grade II* Listed, of 14th-15th century date. It is possible that remains of other buildings associated with the complex survive as buried remains. In addition to the potential for medieval archaeological remains to be present, finds recovered during fieldwalking suggest earlier settlement in the vicinity (ELE 4383).

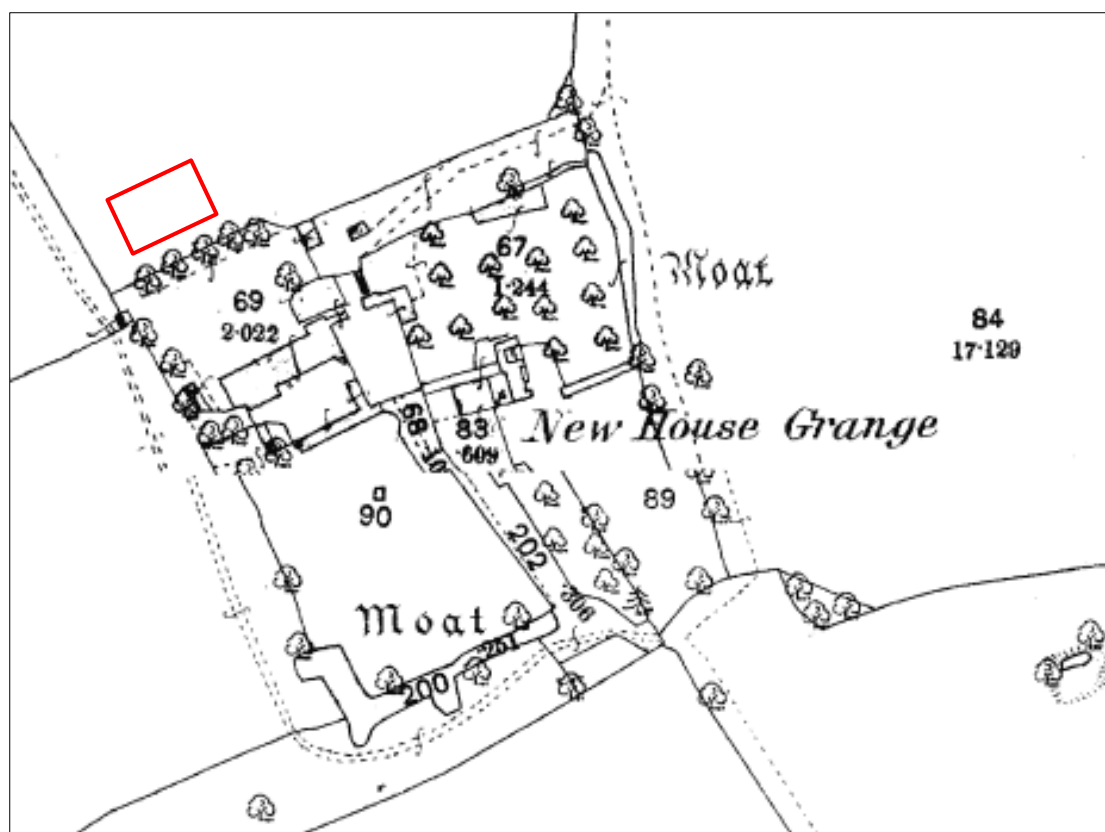


Figure 2: First edition Ordnance Survey 1:25000 map showing location of proposed barn

Aims and Objectives

The general aims of the archaeological work were as follows:

- To determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any archaeological remains that may be present within the development site
- To assess vulnerability/sensitivity of any exposed remains
- To assess the impact of previous land use on the site
- To record to an appropriate level any archaeological deposits located to mitigate impacts of the proposed development on any surviving archaeological remains
- To produce a site archive for deposition with an appropriate museum and to provide information for accession to the Leicestershire HER.

The archaeological programme was deemed a suitable mitigation strategy for the proposed development.

The design specification conforms to the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (2012). It has been designed in accordance with current best archaeological practice and the appropriate national standards and guidelines including:

- *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage, 1991);
- *Model Briefs and Specifications for Archaeological Assessments and Field Evaluations* (Association of County Archaeological Officers, 1994);
- *Code of Conduct* (Institute for Archaeologists, 2010);

- *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavations* (Institute for Archaeologists, 2010);
- *Guidelines and Procedures for Archaeological work in Leicestershire and Rutland* (Leicestershire County Council 1997)

Methodology

Prior to the commencement of works an Accession Code was obtained and the required archive deposition forms completed. An OASIS online record was initiated and the key fields completed on Details, Location and Creator forms. Following recommendations from the Senior Planning Archaeologist (PPA), Historic & Natural Environment Team (HNET), Leicestershire County Council, a programme of strip, map and sample excavation was undertaken.

It was proposed that the project would involve the supervised machine removal of overburden in advance of the commencement of groundworks, with the intention of monitoring the footprint of the foundations to the proposed barn extension.

Topsoil and overburden was removed by a mechanical excavator (JCB3C) using a toothless ditching bucket (c.1.6m wide), under archaeological supervision. The spoil generated during the evaluation was mounded away from the edges of the trenches and topsoil and subsoil was stored separately. Mechanical excavation ceased at undisturbed natural deposits. A photographic record, utilising black and white negative film, supplemented by high resolution digital data capture, was maintained during the course of the fieldwork.

Results

Machining followed the line of the footings for the proposed barn extension along its eastern and western gable ends. The presence of a standing crop of rape prevented the monitoring of the line of the principal east-west wall. Consequently a single c.32m long south-west to north-east aligned trench was excavated slightly south of the line of the wall within the footprint of the proposed building.

The removal of the 0.18m-0.25m thick accumulation of dark grey-brown clay silt plough soil revealed a deep reddish-brown sandy natural clay substratum with sporadic dull greenish-grey shale patching and streaks. There were no indications of archaeology, either in terms of artefactual or structural terms.



Figure 3: Machining in progress: view looking south-west



Figure 4: Machining in progress: view looking north-west

Conclusions

The archaeological evaluation at Newhouse Grange, Sheepy Magna, produced no artefactual or structural evidence of archaeological activity, reflecting cartographic

and archaeological evidence that the development site lies beyond the known limits of the medieval grange complex.

Archive and Publications

The site archive (X.A85.2013), consisting of paper and photographic records, will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council.

The archive consists of:

- A watching brief record sheet
- 6 digital photographs
- 2 x monochrome photos
- A risk assessment form

Publication

A version of the excavation summary (see above) will appear in due course in the *Transactions of the Leicestershire and Rutland Archaeological and Historical Society*.

Acknowledgements

Roger Kipling of ULAS undertook the archaeological programme on behalf of Mr. & Mrs. R. Poulson. The project was managed by Patrick Clay.

Bibliography

Brown, D., 2008 *Standard and guidance for the preparation of Archaeological Archives* (Institute for Archaeologists)

IfA, 2008 *Codes of Conduct and Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*.

ULAS 2013 *Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Work: Strip, Map and Sample Excavation*.

Oasis Information

Project Name	Newhouse Grange, Orton Lane, Sheepy Magna, Leicestershire (SK 317 024)
Project Type	Archaeological strip, map and sample excavation
Project Manager	Patrick Clay
Project Supervisor	Roger Kipling
Previous/Future work	Development
Current Land Use	Agricultural

Development Type	Agricultural
Reason for Investigation	NPPF
Position in the Planning Process	Post-determination
Site Co ordinates	NGR SK 317 024
Start/end dates of field work	05/07/2013
Archive Recipient	Leicestershire County Council
Study Area	

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